Treasury Women
1795 - 1975
From Sarah to Anita

In Memoriam

Catherine Coleman
Assistant Director for General Services
Office of Administrative Programs

1924 - 1976

"Prejudices and outmoded customs act as barriers to the full realization of women's basic rights which should be respected and fostered as part of our nations nation's commitment to human dignity, freedom and democracy..."

President John F. Kennedy 1961

"We must now deal with those inequities that still linger as barriers to the full participation of women in our Nation's life. We must also support and strengthen the laws that prohibit discrimination based on sex."

President Gerald R. Ford 1975

LADY CLERKS LEAVING THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT AT WASHINGTON.—[Sketched by A. R. Waud.]

1790's

1795 Sarah Waldrake and Rachael Summers were the first women hired by the Treasury. They were employed by the Mint as adjusters at 50¢ a day. Their job was to weigh gold coins and adjust their correct weight by filing.

1798 Two more women were hired as adjusters by the Mint. Their wages had been raised to 75¢ a day. Men received up to $1.20 for the same work.

1800-1860

1827 A female nurse was employed by Revenue Cutter Service, which reported to the Customs Service.

1835 Seven lady lighthouse keepers earned annual salaries ranging from $350 to $600. The administration of lighthouses was a Customs Service activity.

1841 By this year at least two women were employed by the Customs Service. One, Augusta Owen, was a surveyor in Virginia at $156 a year. The duties of surveyor included: taking charge of incoming vessels that were placed in quarantine, supervising the shipping of cargo, and examining the baggage during a vessel's stay in port.

CIVIL WAR

1861 Helen Bennett was the first woman hired to work in the Treasury Building. Mrs. Bennett carried out her ill husband's job of copying and recording, and received his $1600 annual salary.

1862 Francis E. Spinner, Treasurer of the United States, requested from Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase the authority to hire women. His reason was economy, "A woman can use scissors better than a man, and she will do it cheaper. I want to employ women to cut the Treasury notes."

The first woman hired to perform that job was Miss Jennie Douglas. Her workload that year was lightened by the employment of 70 more women. Spinner, the first government official to employ substantial numbers of women, paid them $600 a year ($50 a month) , one-half to one-third that of the salary of male clerks.

Sophia Holmes, the first black woman hired by the U.S. Government, was also employed by Treasury. Mrs. Holmes, a free native of Washington, worked as a charwoman in the Division of Issue at $15 a month. She saved the division $200,000 that had been mistakenly thrown away as trash. As an award, General Spinner promoted her to messenger at $600 a year salary. Mrs. Holmes served in that position for 38 years. She died in 1900 at 79. Secretary of the Treasury Lyman Gage was among the notables at her funeral.

The Civil War created great financial demands upon the government. In July 1862, the nation's first income tax law was passed and the Bureau of Internal Revenue was created. The first employees included eight female clerks. As the war continued many more women were hired at low paying jobs with little status.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing began operation in August with two male and four female employees.

1863 The new bureau, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, hired women to examine notes, which were believed to be counterfeit, redeemed by national banks. This section later became part of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

1864 Engraving and Printing's work force consisted of 237 males and 288 females. Women cut and trimmed notes and examined printed bills for imperfections. Mrs. Willard A. Leonard, hired by the Treasurer as the chief counterfeit detector, won a nation-wide reputation. Referred to by the press as "The Female Sherlock Holmes," she gained fame as the most remarkable woman in government. In 41 years she never made an error.

The law of March 14, 1864 is the first known statutory recognition or reference to the employment of women. The Appropriation Act of 1864 authorized the employment of females in four clerical classes at salaries not to exceed $600.

1865 The new bureau, Secret Service, filled some of their clerical positions with women.

Treasury hired Mrs. Helen L. McLean Kimball, who a decade later began a 20-year career as the Treasury's first woman librarian. During this time she built up a valued collection.

LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1866 The Appropriations Act raised the salary of female clerks and counters in the government to $900 a year.

1867 Five female customs inspectors worked at the New York Customshouse for $3 a day, a dollar less than their male counterparts.

The number of women employed in the Treasury reached 454.

1870 Mary Walker, daughter of former Secretary of the Treasury Robert J. Walker, hired as a clerk in the Internal Revenue Bureau.

Heads of government departments were authorized to appoint female clerks found " competent and worthy" to any of the grades of clerkship with the compensation belonging to that class. This law influenced the employment of women in the federal government for 92 years. Ironically this law was interpreted as giving appointing officers the unrestricted right to consider men or women only in making appointments.

Information to Congress showed that women receiving lower salaries outperformed men.

1871 Women employees in Treasury numbered 677; 23 were making $1,200 or more a year, three received $1,400.

Treasury female employees included 56 lighthouse or beacon keepers.

General Spinner paid tribute to women clerks' proficiency as rapid and accurate counters, restorers of mutilated currency, counterfeit detectors, and correspondents.

After the great Chicago fire, six women in the Treasurer's office pieced together and identified with extraordinary patience and care the charred remains of 100 cases of money, bonds, certificates, and Internal Revenue and postage stamps.

1872 After the fire in Boston, the six women again identified and salvaged burned currency and securities. These women were: M. J. Patterson, supervisor; Katherine Davis, Louise Shriner, Agnes Wright, Frances Powers, and a Miss Pearl.

1875 Mrs. Mary Rachael Donelson Wilcox was hired at the personal request of President Grant. Mrs. Wilcox, daughter of Andrew Jackson's adopted son, was born in the White House. A linguist, she made an excellent record in the Department.

1870's The daughters of Chief Justice Taney were also employed in the Treasury.

1880 Women employees in Treasury numbered 1,060.

1883 The Civil Service Act established the merit system. Women were encouraged to compete on the same basis as men. A Vassar graduate, Mary Frances Hoyt, made the highest score on the first examination in 1883 and received the second appointment under the new system. She was hired as a $900-a-year clerk in Treasury's Bank Redemption Agency. The Civil Service Act did not, however, end the men or women only interpretation of the 1870 act. But, the merit system did end the pressure on top Treasury officials to hire the female friends of the politically influential.

1887 A few women were appointed to positions of Deputy Collector-and-Inspector of Customs at a salary of $1,000 a year.

1898 Women remained in low paying clerical jobs in IRS and, during the last summers of the 19th century, worked under extremely adverse conditions.

1900 - 1919

1900 At the turn of the century, women were operating coin presses in the Bureau of the Mint.

At the same time women were working as cashiers, clerks, stenographers, "typewriters" and inspectresses for the Customs Service.

1909 Mrs. Gertrude McNally Steward was a prime initiator of the regular meetings of the Women's Union, Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Mrs. Steward was largely responsible for the organization of the union and its remarkable development as a service institution offering a hospital guild, insurance and other benefits. In 1918 the union affiliated with the National Federation of Federal Employees.

1910 In the early years of the century, Margaret V. Kelly held an important position in the office of the Director of the Mint and drew one of the largest salaries paid to a woman by the government. Secretary of the Treasury Franklin MacVeagh designated her Acting Director of the Mint in the absence of the bureau's two top officials.

1917 - 1919
As the number of registered accounts increased at a tremendous rate, women were recruited in large numbers by the Bureau of Public Debt to handle the workload of the prompt payment of dividends.

1918 Substantial change occurred in the status of women at IRS. The Bureau proposed training and recruiting women for jobs previously done exclusively by men. Clerks and junior employees were trained for professional positions.

1919 The Bureau of Accounts and Deposits was created and women were employed in professional positions.

Eva Adams was the first woman chemist hired by the Customs Service. She worked in San Francisco.

Civil Service Commission opened all Civil Service examinations to both sexes.

Julia Hanna Rorer was the first woman employee of the legal offices of the Internal Revenue Service. She held the position of clerk.

Perforating Postage Stamps

1920's

1920 Adelia Stewart, first woman named Assistant Chief, Examining Division, Comptroller of the Currency.

Many women worked as clerks when Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms' units were still part of IRS.

Bella Kahn became the first woman chemist in the New York Customs laboratory which analyzed prohibited narcotics. Ms. Kahn, an expert in opium, hashish , and cocaine cases, also testified in federal court.

1921 Adelia Stewart was the first woman commissioned a National Bank Examiner in the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

1922 Delphine Green was the third woman chemist hired by the Customs Service Boston Laboratory.

1923 Classification Act established the concept of "equal pay for equal work" irrespective of sex in the federal service. While the 1870 act had merely authorized equal pay, the new law made the concept a requirement.

Mary M. O'Reilly, the Mint's first professional woman, began a 15-year career as the first Assistant Director of the Mint. In 1933 she was considered for the post of Director.

Mabel G. Reinecke, was appointed Collector of Internal Revenue in Chicago. A political appointment, she was the first woman in IRS to achieve high status. Mrs. Reinecke served during an extremely difficult time -- the era of bootleggers and gangs.

1925 Annie H. Martin served for three years as Assayer-in-Charge, Carson City Assay Office.

Annabel Matthews, a career civil servant who began as a clerk, was appointed an attorney in the Office of the Solicitor, IRS. Within ten years, six other women attorneys were hired by the Treasury's legal divisions.

1926 Adelia Stewart was the first woman promoted to Chief of the Examining Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

First woman promoted to Superintendent, Personnel Office, Engraving and Printing.

1927 First woman promoted to Forewoman, Offset Printing, Examining Unit, Engraving and Printing.

Annabel Matthews of IRS was appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury to represent the U.S. at the League of Nations International Conference on Double Taxation. Later on Ms. Matthews became a member of the U.S. Board of Tax Appeals.

1928 Bessie F. Kelly was appointed to the Field Audit Review Division, a position similar to today's Revenue Agent's work.

1929 Susannah B. Blandy was named Chief of the Research Subsection in the Statistical Section, Clearing Division ,IRS.

1930's

1930 Margaret Ellis was appointed the first woman customs examiner in the U.S. She appraised clothes and fabrics.

1933 Nellie Tayloe Ross, former Governor of Wyoming, the first woman governor in the U.S., began a 20-year term as the first woman Director of the Mint. Mrs. Ross has served the longest term as Director.

1930's Bessie Mowbray became a Deputy Collector (Revenue Officer) in Colorado at a time when few women were hired as field Revenue Officers.

Mary K. Reed, one of the first lady tax analysts, was hired.

Women first appointed to responsible positions in the Bureau of Public Debt as technicians and supervisors of securities examination, claims, and correspondence.

1934 Marion G. Bannister was appointed to a long and distinguished career as Assistant Treasurer of the United States. She retired in 1951.

The 114-year old legal office of the Treasury, known for a century as the Office of the Solicitor, was reorganized and renamed the Office of the General Council. Within a month of taking office in 1934, Treasury's first General Counsel appointed three women lawyers to the staff. They were Teresea S. Campise, Sienna Delahunt, and Evelyn E. West.

Attorney General interpreted the law of 1870 as giving federal agencies the option of requesting men only or women only to fill civil service positions. Equal opportunity in the federal service was given a severe setback by this opinion, made 14 years after the 19th amendment gave women the rights of full citizenship.

1935 Josephine Roche was appointed the first woman Assistant Secretary of the Treasury by President Roosevelt. Miss Roche proved to be a dynamic official during her eight years in office.

Gabrielle E. Forbush organized and served for 15 years as the Chief of the Correspondence Division, Office of the Secretary. She had previously been an editor, author, and secretarial aide to President Franklin Roosevelt.

1936 Isabella Stevenson Diamond became the fifth woman librarian. She organized the present modern system that won commendation from eminent librarians and educators.

Mary Elizabeth Switzer established, with the approval of Secretaries Mellon and Mills, a departmental daily editorial and public opinion service for the Office of the Secretary.

1937 Helen H. Esgate was promoted to Division Chief, Tariff Classifications Division, the first woman to head a major office at Customs headquarters.

1938 Anita Wells, an economist, was hired as the first professional woman in the newly established office of Tax Analysis.

STAMP CUTTING MACHINE

1940's

1940 The Bureau of Accounts was organized and professional women were hired by the new division.

Marie Beardsley became the first female head of the Customs Quota Unit. She served 14 years.

Civil Service Commission urged agencies to utilize women in occupations in which few or no women had normally been engaged and urged the provision of training facilities for them.

1941-1942

U.S. Savings Bonds Division was created and women were offered positions of responsibility such as assistant to the Director of Advertising and Promotion, Director of Women's Activities, Market Analyst, and professional field positions.

A National Women's Division comprised of professional and laboring women and homemakers was established by the Savings Bonds Division volunteering to sell Series E Bonds.

With the outbreak of World War II and issuance of the war bonds, the Bureau of Public Debt hired thousands of women to meet the workload. Women have comprised a large percentage of work force ever since.

Woman appointed as Financial Assistant to the Commissioner of Public Debt.

Women promoted toSuperintendent, Examining Division, Engraving and Printing.

Daisy U. Holder became first woman Customs guard on an international bridge at El Paso, Texas.

1940's Women were desperately needed by IRS to maintain the Service as many male employees went to war. Of the 24,000 temporary appointments, 16,000 remained as permanent employees.

First professional women, attorneys, were hired by the Bureau of Public Debt.

1943 Large numbers of women hired for first time at Engraving and Printing. Many of them volunteered for assignments normally performed by men.

For the first time the Customs Service hired two women lawyers, Teresa Campise and Margaret Coates , in the Chief Counsel's Office. Their salaries, however, lagged behind those of male attorneys.

1942-1944

Large numbers of women were hired for the first time to work in production areas of the Mint. Many performed the jobs of men who entered the Armed Forces.

Mid 1940's

Helen C. Moore appointed Assistant Superintendent of Philadelphia Mint.

1946 Edna L. Silber named Chief of the Division of Personnel, Customs Service.

Late 1940's

Top female economist brought to Treasury's international division.

1949 Georgia Neese Clark appointed the first woman Treasurer by President Truman. The six succeeding Treasurers have been women.

1950s

1952 Gladys P. Morelock named first woman Superintendent of the Denver Mint. Since then, all succeeding superintendents have been women.

Early 1950's
The first professional female accountants were hired by the Bureau of Public Debt.

1953 Mary Hazel Crawford began a 17-year career as the Bureau of Public Debt's first woman chief of a regional legal staff. Ms. Crawford served in Chicago.

Rae V. Biester began eight-year term as first woman Superintendent of the nation's oldest mint in Philadelphia.

1954 First woman appointed to the mid-management position of Head, Employee Relations Branch, Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

1955 First woman named Head of Engraving and Printing's Wage and Classification Branch.

1950's First woman promoted to a mid-management (GS-13) position in Savings Bonds.

Myrtice G. Pomeroy became Custom's first public information specialist.

Catherine Campbell was appointed the first woman Treasury Assistant Attache, Office of the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, then known as the Office of International Finance. Ms. Campbell was assigned to London.

1958 First woman promoted to a mid-management position (GS-12) in the Bureau of Accounts.

First woman promoted to the head of the Note Processing Branch, Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

1959 Irene Feagin Scott was the first woman in IRS' Chief Counsel's Office to be promoted to GS-15 . Mrs. Scott was later appointed a Judge of the U.S. Tax Court.

1960s

1960's First woman Inspector was hired in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms opening up the field to others.

Secret Service first opened to women occupations more diverse than those previously available.

1961 Margaret W. Schwartz was the first career woman promoted to supergrade in Treasury history. Mrs. Schwartz was the Director, Foreign Assets Control Office.

Savings Bonds Division appointed the first woman to the post of State Director.

Eva Adams appointed second woman Director of the Mint.

First Executive Administrative Assistant, a mid-management position, in the new Congressional Relations Office was held by a woman.

1962 In a landmark decision, the Attorney General reversed the ruling that, under the interpretation of the 1870 law, jobs were male or female only. The Civil Service Commission revised regulations to require that all appointments be made regardless of sex, except law enforcement positions requiring use of firearms, thus limiting Treasury hiring practices.

1963 Report of the two-year Presidential Commission on the Status of Women was issued. The recommendations were implemented, in part, by the creation of an Interdepartmental Committee on the Status of Women, chaired by the Secretary of Labor.

1964 The Civil Rights Act, Title VII held that it "shall be the policy of the United States to insure equal employment opportunities for Federal employees without discrimination because of ... sex ..."

Marguerite Bean was hired as the first woman lawyer in the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. Miss Bean's career was as a Representative in Trust, an examiner of the trust department of banks. This position usually requires a legal background.

1965 1870 law repealed.

Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon appointed the Department's first Advisory Committee of the Status of Women in Treasury. The Committee, chaired by Dr. Margaret W. Schwartz, Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control, conducted the first survey of women's status in the Treasury.

Second woman National Bank Examiner hired by the Comptroller of the Currency. Additional female examiners were hired in the following years.

Charlotte Tuttle Lloyd was Treasury's first and to date only woman Assistant General Counsel. Mrs. Lloyd was appointed by President Johnson to the GS-17 position and became one of the few women to achieve supergrade status in the Department. Less than one percent of the women in government are in the supergrades, GS-16 - GS-18.

1966 The first woman professional, a Personnel Management Assistant, was hired by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Mary E. Taylor became first woman to be named to the prestigious IRS Executive Development Program.

Mary E. Taylor was the first woman in IRS history to achieve the rank of Assistant District Director.

1967-1968

The Civil Service published agency guidelines implementing the Federal Women's Program.

1968 Customs employed 55 inspectresses in the Service.

1969 First woman Assistant Superintendent, Examining Division, named in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs (OASIA), in a breakthrough in personnel policy, began hiring qualified professional women for training as Assistant and Financial Attaches, and economists to research international monetary issues.

Mary Brooks was the third woman named Director of the Mint.

President creates Task Force on Women's Rights and Responsibilities.

Federal Women's Program integrated into the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program by Executive Order.

1970 Bureau of Government Financial Operations promoted its first woman to a position at the GS-15 level.

OASIA began to hire more women at mid-level positions.

Customs decided that women could handle full range of cargo and baggage inspection duties and abolished the title Inspectress. Henceforth, both men and women would be known as Inspectors.

Customs appointed the youngest person ever to head a division and that person was a woman. Kathryn C. Peterson was appointed the first woman director of the Division of Regulations. Three years later she was named Assistant to the Commissioner for Regulations and Rulings.

Miss Alice Ohanian named the first woman Deputy Chief Disbursing Officer, Bureau of Government Financial Operations.

1971 In an important ruling, the Civil Service Commission permitted women to hold law enforcement posts requiring the use of firearms. This decision opened up many Treasury jobs to women.

Customs became the first Treasury Bureau to take advantage of that ruling and hired the first women sky marshals. One was Bonni Tischler, now the Bureau's Acting Federal Women's Coordinator.

Customs continued its advanced hiring policies and becomes the first Treasury agency to hire women as gun-bearing speci agents. Commissioner of Customs, Myles J. Ambrose, named the first five agents chosen from applicants within Customs: Susan Gail Rowley, Geraldine R. Baker, Sara E. Durant, Phyllis Ann Barrett, and Janet Ingram.

Secret Service hired five women as Special Agents, the first such appointments in the 106-year history of the Service.

Customs appointed Marlene Schuler as its first Patrol Officer in New York. Her work includes surveillance and ship searches. Recently she joined the bureau's newly formed scuba diving team.

Secret Service promoted its first woman to a mid-level (GS-13) position as Supervisory Administrative Specialist (Internal Security).

1972 Civil Rights Act, Title VII, was amended to grant employees the right to sue federal agencies on grounds of discrimination in federal employment and to give the Civil Service enforcement powers.

Final Congressional approval of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U. S. Constitution was sent to the states for ratification.

Engraving and Printing named its first woman Head of the General Accounts Branch.

Customs appointed its first woman operations officer, Ravel Lutz, to the Inspection and Control Division.

Mrs. Teresa Campise was appointed the first woman Assistant Chief Counsel of the U.S. Customs Service. The honor came some months before Mrs. Campise retired after 38 years with the Department.

Gertrude Mangan named the first woman Director, Financing Staff, Bureau of Government Financial Operations.

1973 Carolyn K. Buttolph became the first woman to be named a District Director of the Internal Revenue Service. Mrs. Buttolph, a career government official, is assigned to the Burlington, Vermont office.

Engraving and Printing appointed the first woman to head the Procurement Branch.

Dolores Morgan was named the first woman Special Assistant to the Commissioner, Bureau of Government Financial Operations management. The position carries a high mid-grade.

ATF hired its first female Special Agents.

The Office of Legislative Affairs hired the first woman for the position of Staff Assistant to the Deputy Under Secretary for Congressional Relations.

Office of Revenue Sharing was established and professional women were hired. Three of its eight division managers are women, two of whom are GS-15s.

OASIA hired a large number of professional women, such as economists and statisticians, at senior levels.

1974 First woman appointed Head of the Office Services Branch, Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Francine I. Neff, 7th woman Treasurer of the United States, was appointed the first woman National Director of the U. S. Savings Bonds Division.

Phoebe Matthews named the first woman Regional Counsel, Comptroller of the Currency. Miss Matthews is now assigned to Philadelphia.

1975 Comptroller of the Currency issued comments on proposed Equal Credit Opportunity Regulation to the Federal Reserve Board.

Joyce Barbie was named the first woman Deputy Director, Division of Government Accounts and Reports, Bureau of Government Financial Operations.

Secret Service employed 16 women agents who receive the same training and assignments as men. Secret Service has 11 women officers assigned to the Executive Protective Service.

Women in the Savings Bonds Division now serve in every position of field and headquarters operations.

First woman named as Chief, Office of Securities Processing, Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Patricia A. Metzer appointed to a supergrade position of IRS' Associate Tax Legislative Counsel. She is the second woman to work in the Office of the Tax Legislative Counsel which is responsible for developing amendments to the Internal Revenue Code.

MaryRose Riley became the first supervisory Customs Patrol Officer, Customs Service.

Sue Steiner was named Treasury's first woman Treasury Financial Attache, and is now assigned to New Delhi, India.

Treasury appointed a woman, Abby Gilbert, Bicentennial Coordinator.

Anita Alpern was appointed the first woman GS-18 in Treasury history upon being named Assistant Commissioner for Planning and Research, Internal Revenue Service. Miss Alpern is one of eight women holding the highest career level position in the Federal Government.

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